

LOCAL NOTES. CHURCH HATCH.

C.T. September 15, 1928

The prospect of the two acres of grounds of Church Hatch being built upon to the everlasting detriment of the Priory Church has excited feelings of dismay among the townspeople, and of doubt in the minds of a few. These doubts will soon be set at rest, according to Mr. Lambert, a member of the firm which has bought the premises, for he states that operations will start on Sept. 28, when Mr. Lindsay Jones vacates the premises. There is not long to "wait and see" what will happen, and for our part we feel keenly with the Vicar the development of any scheme which will mar the beauty of the Priory and, indeed, of the town for ever, and we think that the majority of the townspeople will be of the same opinion.

The question has been raised as to what the Town Council can do? As far as we understand things, they can do nothing to prevent the owners from developing the site as long as the building bye-laws are conformed with, in the same way that they were powerless to prevent the erection of the tea house on the Monk's Walk, which Mr. Lindsay Jones himself strongly opposed. The Town Council in past years could have bought that meadow and preserved the uninterrupted and charming view for ever, but they did not seize the opportunity; neither are they likely, from what we hear, to step in and save the situation on this occasion. It is possible that they have powers to purchase it as a park, but the chances of their doing so are very remote indeed. The view taken by one or two members is that "it is up to the Church" or some wealthy private individual.

The Vicar (Canon Gay), in an interview with the "Christchurch Times," made it plain that it was not his idea that some wealthy old lady should buy Church Hatch and present it to him—although it would be very silly on his part if he declined to accept, should such an offer be made. His idea is that somebody should buy it and live there, adding a clause in the deeds prohibiting the development of the grounds either by the erection of houses or other scheme of spoliation, so that the present surroundings should be preserved for the benefit of the townspeople and the 100,000 visitors who come to the Priory Church annually.

"I have no stunt at all except to preserve the amenities of the Priory Church," he informed us. "Some people have got hold of the idea that I am out to benefit myself by appealing to the old ladies of Bournemouth to buy Church Hatch, so that I can have it as the Vicarage. That is altogether wrong. I am quite content with my splendid Vicarage. Romsey Abbey has been spoilt by houses crowding in on top of it. Just imagine the hideousness of it, if rows of houses are put up adjoining our beautiful old Priory Church, with rows of wireless poles and clothes lines with washing hanging out."

A charge of lack of foresight is now brought against the Church Council by some residents, who contend that they should have bought Church Hatch—where a former Vicar, the Rev. Mr. Nash, used to live—and converted it into a permanent vicarage, instead of building the Church Hall at a cost of between £3,000 and £4,000, and that the present vicarage should have been used for parish meetings. This no doubt would have been admirable policy, but there was probably no idea then of the impending fate of Church Hatch and its effect on the Priory Church.

A number of letters have been received on the subject, notably from visitors who admire the present setting of the church. Several suggestions are made as to what the Vicar should do, but, as Canon Gay remarked, he had himself thought of nearly all of them. One is that the Mayors, of Bournemouth and Christchurch should be approached to form a committee of action, the writer holding the view that the destruction of the Priory's amenities would injure Bournemouth's prosperity as a holiday and health resort. This writer made the further comment that if the Borough of Christchurch had adopted the Town Planning Act the danger might have been considerably lessened. We feel that this would be Bournemouth's reply to Christchurch—that our own town should take such steps as are within its powers to "keep its own house beautiful."

Another suggestion which the Vicar thought of was whether the Shute bequest could be utilised for the purchase of Church Hatch. We understand that this fund totals about £10,000, but the obstacle is that the conditions limit the application of this money to the upkeep of the lady chapel. Isn't it possible to invest the capital in the purchase of Church Hatch, using the rental for the upkeep of the lady chapel?

CHURCH HATCH.

DEVELOPMENT POSTPONED UNTIL END OF NOVEMBER.

C.T. October 6, 1928

Church Hatch is now vacant, Mr. F. Lindsay Jones having taken up his residence in Southbourne. The threatened development of this site of two acres has been postponed until the end of November. The position is outlined in the Parish Magazine for October by the Vicar (Canon Gay) as follows:

My "Cry from the Heart," published in the last issue of the Magazine, soon attracted (as I thought it would) the attention of the Press. The "Christchurch Times" led off, and then the "Echo." Thanks to these, the London papers published the "Cry," and I was inundated with letters from all parts of England. One lady called and pressed 10s. into my hands to commence a Fund to buy the property—if we obtain from one source or another the money to purchase she will have the satisfaction of knowing that she set the ball rolling. Another lady wrote to the Queen and received a very sympathetic letter from Her Majesty. I considered the position desperate, so I called an emergency meeting of the Church Council, who appointed a committee consisting of the Vicar and churchwardens, the hon. secretary and hon. treasurer of the Church Council, the Mayor of Christchurch, and Sir Stuart Fraser to advise and report on the matter.

This committee have met twice and the vendor has been interviewed. There is little question but that he intends to cut up the property and build a row of villas or cottages unless a private purchaser comes immediately and gives him his price of £5,500. Such a block of houses would destroy not only our view from "Paradise" over the estuary and Forest, but would also block the view of the Priory from the bridges. I say here most emphatically, If this row of houses goes up, then write "ICHABOD" over Christchurch Twynham.

At present it may not be wise to write much. Let it be sufficient that we are seriously contemplating an appeal through the Press to the country and have approached the National Trust and other organisations which exist to preserve the amenities of historic places and buildings.

I have been invited to lunch with the Bournemouth Rotary Club, and have been promised ten minutes to speak on the threatened desecration. Whatever is done must be done quickly. The vendor has kindly promised to postpone development until Nov. 31, and to give us the first refusal.

To Save Church Hatch.

APPEAL TO BE LAUNCHED IN ENGLISH & U.S. NEWSPAPERS.

C.T. October 13, 1928

The Vicar (Rev. Canon W. H. Gay) addressed the Bournemouth Rotary Club at their weekly luncheon on Monday on the subject of Church Hatch, which is threatened with development to the spoliation of the Priory Church.

He told this audience of business men that Church Hatch was a beautiful old Georgian residence with two acres of gardens, and remarked that those of them who had stood on the Priory eminence and looked across in the direction of Mudeford and across the Channel must realise what the feeling was in Christchurch at the prospect of the erection of a row of about a dozen houses in front of the Priory, and of the vision in the near future of clothes lines from which were suspended hosiery and, perhaps, "undies." (Laughter).

Canon Gay further stated that in the course of a year there were more visitors to Christchurch Priory than to any other church or cathedral in England, with the exception of St. Paul's and Westminster. Last year no fewer than 80,000 people paid for admission to the Priory Church, and that number might well be increased to 100,000 by reason of the fact that many diocesan bodies were allowed in without payment. From this they must all realise what a great asset Christchurch was to Bournemouth.

The view of the church to motorists passing over the old Town Bridge was one that was very much appreciated by travellers, and it was an additional matter of interest that only three weeks ago nearly 50,000 cars passed through the town on the way to Bournemouth. "If this row of houses goes up, then 'Ichabod' must be written over the Priory," observed Canon Gay.

They had been offered the first refusal of the premises at a price of £5,500. That was a big undertaking for Christchurch, which was far from being a rich parish. During the seven years that he had been at Christchurch he had had to build a Church Hall and fulfil other obligations, and to-day they were £4,000 or £5,000 in debt.

"It is a scandalous shame," he went on later, "that people should come in and buy up our beauty spots. It does incline one to Socialism when people destroy the things that are beautiful."

He mentioned that an appeal was shortly to be made through 15 newspapers, in America as well as in England, for help to preserve this ancient and beautiful landmark. He hoped that Bournemouth would give some consideration to the cry that now came from the mother town. Christchurch was a poor town, so poor that they had a greater number of slums than he had ever been seen even in dockland.

"We wish to appeal," he concluded, "to the artists and architects of England, to all those who love the beautiful in this old-fashioned town."

CHURCH HATCH SUBJECT OF SERMON BY VICAR.

C.T. October 27, 1928

Reference to the threatened development of Church Hatch Gardens was made by the vicar (Rev. Canon Gay) in a sermon at the Priory church on Sunday, in the course of which he stated:

Coming down Pokesdown Hill by 'bus you will see a board "Ancient lights." Such signs "warn off," and are intended to warn of speculators and builders, for ancient lights are guarded and protected by the law of the land.

Unfortunately the law does not recognise ancient lights, and anyone (who have money behind them) can boldly enter any of our picturesque villages, buy up a beauty spot point with a view point and completely block that view from those who have been born to it, grown up with it, and love it with a great love.

These viewpoints have been the treasured possessions of the inhabitants for hundreds of years, and even when poverty or adventure forced some into exile, yet the memory of them remained and kept the exiles faithful to the old homeland and to the old scenes of their childhood. The old view-points of rural England have a greater spiritual value than we imagine, and one rejoices that public opinion is awakening to the fact. Every day we read of a celebrated sight or historical building being preserved, presented or saved by the generosity of a benefactor, or by an appeal to the public.

Most of you are cognizant of the peril which threatens this historic and beloved spot. My "Cry from the Heart," written in the September Magazine, has been referred to in most of the London papers, and I have received letters from all parts of England with suggestions how to avoid the disaster. Let me say at once that our Church Council are very alive to the peril, and very shortly you will see by the Press now you can assist.

I have attached to the notice-board in the porch a page from the current number of the "Church Times." which gives a view of the Priory and the land adjoining which is threatened to be cut up for the purpose of erecting twelve villas.

You can imagine the backs of these villas facing the Priory; their wash tubs, their clothes-lines, their tin receptacles, their children's rabbit hutches, their chicken runs behind wire netting, their home-made kennels (made out of sugar tubs)—in fact, all the usual back-door paraphernalia.

But worse than all this, imagine the partial blocking of our view to the forest, marshes and sea, which has been our valued inheritance for centuries—the complete blocking of the incomparable north-east end of the Priory as seen from the Town Bridge and the entrance to the Borough.

I would ask all visitors to walk round the church path and view the threatened vandalism, and then to order a half-dozen copies of the current number of the "Christchurch Times" and send them to those who reverence the lovely and the beautiful.

For unless we can purchase these two acres by November 31, we have been told, the steam rollers may invade the property at 12 hours' notice. There is no such thing as "ancient lights," and the only way to save them is by sacrifice; sacrifice on the part of those who love them.

S.O.S CHURCH HATCH APPEAL

C.T. November 24th. 1928

We would remind our readers that the time, within which the endeavour to save the surroundings and amenities of both Church and Churchyard by the raising of a fund for the purchase of the Church Hatch property, is fast drawing to an end. We would urge all those who desire to assist in preserving the beauty of the central attraction of our town to pay their donations at once to Lloyd's Bank. It would indeed be a calamity to the town if any houses were erected on this site. The local Committee has done its utmost to save the situation. The inhabitants should now support the fund required to the utmost of their ability. But such support must be given AT ONCE.

DISCUSSION AND OFFER AT ADULT SCHOOL.

At Sunday morning's meeting of Christchurch Adult School, Mr. A. H. Owen gave some readings from Tolstoy and Mr. F.D. Lane presided.

Before introducing the speaker, the Chairman urged liberal support to the appeal for the purchase of Church Hatch.

An interesting discussion ensued, in which various questions were asked, and different points of view became apparent.

What would be done with the property if it were acquired? Who would receive the income? The property would be managed by the Church Council as trustees and be let as a private house, the freehold being vested in the National Trust in such a way as would remove any possibility of future development for building purposes.

It was stated on the one hand that the only object of the appeal for a fund to purchase the property was to prevent the view from the Town Bridge from being spoilt; but, others pointed out that the development would mar all that is historical in Christchurch. Also, if the present appeal succeeds, there may be scope for averting other dangers.

Resentment was felt that the property had been sold without restrictions, but it was felt that many other owners would have done the same.

Ideas were thrown out that the Town Council could and should purchase the property; but, it was felt that this was beyond the power of the Corporation, and that, if a poll of the borough were taken, a majority would be against it. Members of the Town Council present agreed that the Council could do nothing.

As to the Public Health Act 1875, giving a local authority power to reject all plans detrimental to existing properties, legal opinion was to the effect that financial detriment to the selling value of neighbouring property must be shown.

One member of the school said he would give £10 if the place were thrown open to the public, and £20 if another member present would give £10.

Another member said a mortgage could be raised on Church Hatch, reducing the sum necessary for its acquisition to about £2,000, but in this case the problem is who would meet the interest charges?

Someone else asked why the Vicarage could not be sold as a help towards the purchase of Church Hatch. There is no proposal, however, to sell the Vicarage, which has far more accommodation for a vicar and his family than is contained in Church Hatch.

Only one of those present spoke in favour of building cottages in Church Hatch garden.

One conclusion which arose from the discussion was the urgent need for a town planning scheme.

Another suggestion was that Church Hatch might be acquired by the town as a town club, museum, library and reading room.

Among those taking part in the discussion were Councillor F.E. Abbott, Messrs. H.W. Mooring Aldridge and E.H. Clogg, Capt. W. Gibbings, Aldermen H. Harding, Mr. and Mrs. R.W. Hawkins, Mr. T. Jenkins, Mrs. Simmons, and Mr. W.G. Spickernell.

From quite another source comes an offer of £25 if the kitchen garden were open to the public and a rustic bridge erected over the Mill stream.

CHURCH HATCH

WILL IT BECOME AN OPEN PARK FOR THE LIVING, OR A RESTING PLACE FOR THE DEAD.

C.T. December 1st. 1928

THE OBJECT.

To raise £7,000 to buy and maintain Church Hatch and its two acres of gardens because of the threat of the owner to build houses on the site to the spoliation of the amenities of the Priory Church, the purchase price being £5,500.

THE RESULT.

The option to purchase expired yesterday (Friday) and at the time of going to press the sum of approximately £935 17s. 2d. had been raised, the subscriptions received being given below.

THE ALTERNATIVES.

It is self-evident that the appeal to raise (in Christchurch) the colossal sum of £7,000 has failed within the period of the option. That is no fault of the Committee of the Parochial Church Council, who alone have lifted a finger to save this oasis for the town. The thanks of the general public are due to them for the Herculean efforts which they have put forward. The support of the London Press has been enlisted and generously given to make the appeal a national one; some thousands of personal appeals have been sent out; but the efforts of the committee have not met with the reward which was expected. It is hopeless to embark on a £7,000 scheme with a capital of £1,000.

And yet the "Walls of Jericho" have crumbled. A great gap has been created in the defences by an Unseen Hand, which smote with the full force of the winds of Heaven. We would urge the Committee to see in this a message to continue their efforts on behalf the Church and the Town to save this beautiful spot which probably at one time was consecrated by the monks of old.

CHURCH HATCH WALL BLOWN DOWN

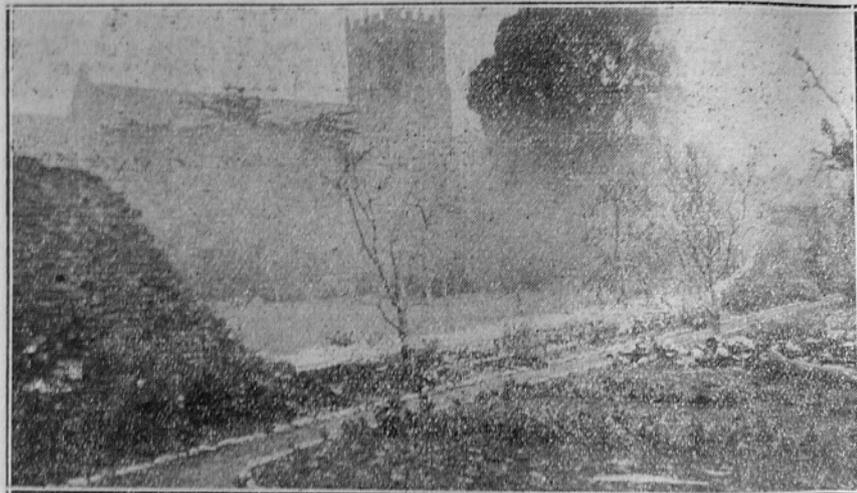


Photo by C. T. December 8th. 1928 C. D. Venning.
As reported in our last issue, some 60 feet of Church Hatch garden wall was blown down in one of the recent gales. The wall stands 10 feet high and is of three-course brick, and runs from the mill stream to the back of the Castle ruins. Our picture gives an idea of another beautiful view of the Priory Church to be obtained if the gardens were thrown open to the public and the whole of the wall removed

We know nothing of the deliberations of the Committee, but would ask them seriously to explore every possible avenue to prevent these grounds from being built on. Failing purchase outright of the whole of the property, we suggest consideration of the following alternatives :—

1. The purchase of the major portion of the grounds, apart from the house and some garden for it. Let the grounds be open as a public park under Parochial Church Council control. If sufficient money is not available for this, why not have an interview with those at the head of the affairs of the P.R.H.A., whose gardens adjoin Church Hatch, and see whether they would not join forces with the church? The owner might sell, say, an acre and a half of the grounds, and dispose of the building and remaining portion of garden separately. He might even add to the number of shops in Church Street by the conversion of the dwelling houses into business premises.
2. And if it cannot be obtained as a park for the living, is it possible to effect its purchase as a resting place for the dead? We are aware that a deputation waited on the Charity Commissioners and placed before them the question of whether the capital of the Shute bequest could be utilised for the purchase of the Church

Hatch property, and that the Commissioners declined to agree to the idea. But could not a loan be raised to buy it as a Church Cemetery? There would of necessity be only a limited number of grave spaces, but there are those who would willingly pay the interment fees to "sleep their last sleep" beneath the shadow of the glorious old Priory and in such a hallowed spot. Fees could be fixed which would make the scheme self-supporting in time. One condition might be that preference should be given to such contributors as desired to avail themselves of burial there, whether resident in the town or out of it, irrespective of denomination.

3. And if neither of the above alternatives is possible through lack of finances or other causes, there is still a third, and maybe, more. But thirdly, failing the schemes referred to, would the owner accept and the committee pay a price for the insertion of a clause in the deeds preventing the grounds from being built upon in perpetuity? We feel that this is a suggestion that will meet with strong condemnation, but it is presented as a means to an end. After all, it has already been suggested that if somebody bought the property and inserted a saving clause to this effect in the deeds the Church authorities would be satisfied.

We would suggest that it would be the course of wisdom for the Committee to meet in round table conference with the owner and see whether it is possible to come to some amicable arrangement to safeguard this "bit of old England" not alone for the sake of the Church, but for the peaceful and restful enjoyment of townspeople and visitors alike. We put forward these suggestions absolutely independently, actuated by the single and sole motive of civic pride and in the devout hope that the Vicar's "cry from the heart" will be answered.

LIST OF SUBSCRIPTIONS.

The following is the list of subscriptions received to the time of going to press:—

Mrs. Wyndham Pain, Miss Nellie Brown, each £100

Lord Manners £50

Mr. Alan Druitt, Mr George Jackson, Mrs. Alan Druitt, Mr. J. J. Crosfield, Mrs. E.A.G. Bennett each £25

Mr. F.W. Kidd £21

Mr. A.J. Street, Miss M.F. Mills, Lady Gatty, collection at Braemore Royal Hotel Southbourne, each £20

Sir William Portal, Bart., Messrs Jenkins & Sons, Ltd., Mrs. B. Blair, each £10 10s.

Col. Wilfred Ashley, M.P., Mr. G.A. Clarke, Miss C.E. Birley, Mrs. M. Braddyll, Mrs. L. J. Lowater, Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Lord, Mr. F. Ricardo, Miss. Lord (St. Anne's-on-Sea), Miss. A. Lord (Southbourne), Mrs. E. J. Clarke, Mrs. M. A. Rawstone, Mr. W. H. Myers, Capt. W.R. Clarke, Mr. W.T. Reynolds, each £10

Miss. A. H. Hanson, Mr. D.L. Smith, Miss. E.D. Boodle, Major J.D. Mills, Dr. H.H. Clarke, each £5 5s.

Sir Stuart Fraser, Miss Irene Vipan, Mrs. R. Braithwaith, Rev. Canon W. H. Gay, Mr. Saurin, Miss M. Eddes, Lady Clementina Tottenham, Mr. W. F. L. Tottenham, Admiral and Mrs. Reeves, Sir Heath Harrison, Mrs. B. Thornton, Mrs. Davenport, Miss Davenport, T.D.M., Mrs. Philip Druitt, the Hon. Lady Curzon Howe, Gen. the Hon. E. J. M. Stuart Wortley; the Hon. Mrs. Stuart Wortley, Mr. Giles T. Pilcher, Mr. J. W. Tucker, Mr. Walter Tucker, Mrs. M. Chaplin, each £5

Mr. F. Donovan Lane £4

Mr. A. A. Allen, Miss H. F. Paul, each £3 3s.

Mrs. Cecil Locke, Miss L. Stroh, Mrs. Ricardo, Miss Jane Houghton, Blanche Lady Dunbar, each £3

The Mayor (Councillor M. B. Robinson), the Rev. C. Stewart Miller, Miss Helen Douglas, Maikhosru Sorabji, Dr. F. Blake, Miss M. Lobb, Mr. E. E. Carter, Mr. F. C. Gore, Mr. P. Hall, the Right Rev. Bishop Talbot, Professor R. Cecil Wood, Mrs. E. Demuth, Col. R. R. Leach, Mrs. Tunnard Moore, Mr. C. L. Northridge, Miss G. M. Wigram, Dr. S. Gurney-Dixon, Miss M. J. C. Hanson, Canon and Mrs. Medlicott, each £2 2s.

Mr. W. S. Corser, Anon., Miss M. O'Dwyer, Mrs. S. Drew, each £2

The Misses and Mrs. C. Sharp, £1 10s.

Miss C. M. Staner, Mrs. and Miss Ward, Miss E. A. Onvery, Mrs. V. Potter, Mr. Frank Warlow, Mr. A. H. Dallis, Mr. G. St. Q. Jones, Sir Brian Egerton. Miss S. E. G. Stevens, Mrs. E. Perkins, Mr. F. A. L. Gibbs, Mr. F. Belben, Misses Dawson, Col. R. F. Anderson, Lt.-Col. and Mrs. Farquhar, Col. W. D. Dickson, Mrs. S. Tanner, Mrs. G. Battersby, the Misses Newman, Mrs. C. Wyld, His Honour A. B. Ellicott, Mr. H. S. Carter, Mr. F. J. Okey, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. J. Dacombe, Miss J. F. Dobbie, Otho Holland, Mr.

Herbert Druitt, Admiral Sir G. Egerton, Dr. and Mrs. Lyndon, Mr. E. D. Hake, Mrs. E. Riley, Mrs. A. M. Haines, each £1 1s.

Mrs. A. Richards, £1 0s. 2d.

Mrs. R. Dodd, Mrs. G. W. Byrde, Mr. H. A. Cartough, Mr. E. Juniper, Mrs. Greatheart, Lt.-Col. H. W. Long, Mrs. M. Saltaire, Mr. R. V. Jackson, Miss S. C. M. Holmes, Mr. W. Jameson, Miss E. B. Taylor, Miss Baldry, Dr. E. Hyla Greves, Miss F. L. Footner, Major the Hon. J. C. Darling, Mr. H. S. Middleton, Mrs. E. K. M. Atkins, Miss E. Cuff, Mr. J. King, Miss E. L. Hume, Mrs. M. R. Hooley, Mrs. P. Shaw, each £1

The Misses Jenoure, 15s.

Mr. E. J. W. Mollett, Mr. O. Fleming, Dr. H. C. and Miss G. E. Male, Mr. and Mrs. C. T. Curry, Miss E. C. Melvill, Miss E. G. Grindley, Miss H. M. Hardman, each 10s 6d.

Miss F. P. Lathbury, Miss E. M. Haynes, Mrs. Darley, Capt. G. G. Borrett, Miss N. C. McCausland, the Misses Dawson, Miss K. Ricardo, Miss M. V. Ricardo, Dr. F. Penrose, Mr. D. Ridler, Mr. D. J. Street, Dr. F. C. Bottomley, Mr. J. J. Kennedy, Mr. and Mrs. Dyson, Miss Rammell, Mr. E. H. Everett Heath, Rev. Canon Cooke Yarborough, Miss Kelsey, Mr. A. W. Waters, A. H. (of Manchester), Misses Goulty, Miss Duxbury, Miss P. Drew, Miss M. Atkin, Brig.-General Sanders, each 10s.

Three lovers of old ruins, 7s. 6d.

Miss P. Appleby, 6s.

Mrs. H. C. Ford, Mrs. R. Riddle, Mr. H. J. Wadlow, Mrs. M. R. Cossins, Rev. C. V. Goddair, Anon., Miss Kitty Shears, Miss M. Towner, Miss G. W. Fennier, M.F.D., each 5s.

Mr. E. A. Gill, 3s.

Mr. and Miss Norman, Mrs. White, Mr. W. A. Cox, Mr. F. W. Robins, each 2s 6d.

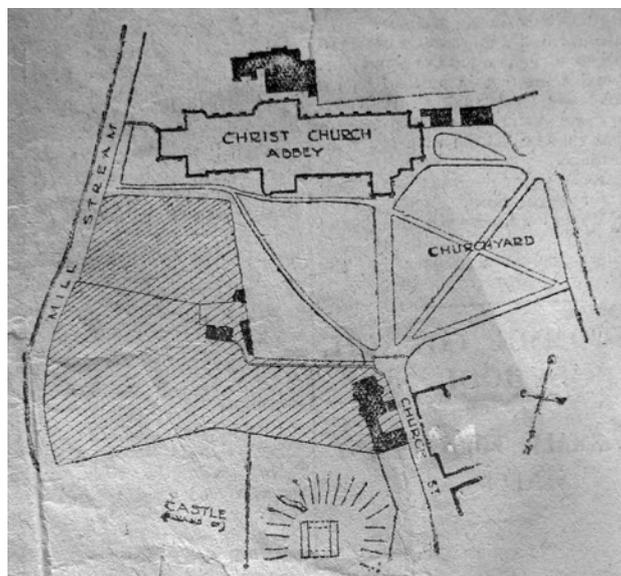
WHY £7,000 IS NEEDED.

The £7,000 which the appeal seeks to raise is made up as follows: Purchase money £5,500, expenses of appeal, printing, stamp duty (£55) and costs of conveyance, say £100; to provide a fund for the maintenance and upkeep of the property, £1,400.

We trust that this information will remove any doubt in the minds of persons who are in consequence withholding their donations, and would again urge the importance of an immediate response to the appeal. All those who listened to the broadcast early in the week should be convinced by now of the urgency of the matter. We understand that the fund still remains open and efforts will be made to extend the period of option to purchase.

CHURCH HATCH' APPEAL Bournemouth Asked To Aid Purchase Fund.

Echo February 22, 1929



Ground Plan of Christchurch Priory and Churchyard, showing the proximity thereto of the Church Hatch property, which is shaded. At its nearest point the boundary of Church Hatch is only 33 feet from the North-East corner of the Chancel Aisle.

Our readers will remember this appeal was issued with the hope of raising a sum which would be sufficient to purchase the property known as Church Hatch lying to the North of the Churchyard which had then recently changed hands, and the new owners of which had in contemplation its development for building purposes. The Church authorities realising what a disaster such a development would be to the surroundings and amenities of this Church—famous alike for its architecture and for its historical associations—lost no time in bringing its powerfully signed appeal before the public. They were sanguine enough to hope that, when the gravity of the situation became known there would be no difficulty in raising the necessary funds, for they felt that when once the danger which threatened the beautiful view of the Priory to be obtained from the town bridge became known people resident not in Christchurch

and Bournemouth, but living in other parts of the County and England, would hasten to come to their aid with donations to save a spot so noted for its beauty.

The time given by the owners for achieving this meritorious object expired at the end of last year, but by the courtesy of the owners the sale has been extended to the 25th March. The list of donations will show that the success of the appeal is still far from accomplishment for the sums received and promised amount to about one-fourth only of the sum required. A further effort to raise the deficiency is now being made and we publish in another column the notice of a public meeting to be held by the kind permission of the Mayor in the lounge at the Bournemouth Town Hall on Thursday the 28th February, at 3 p.m., at which—in the unavoidable absence of the Lord Lieutenant himself—the chair will be taken by the Vice-Lieutenant, Sir William Portal, Bart.

The town of Christchurch is an asset to Bournemouth in that it affords to residents and visitors alike an opportunity of seeing buildings some alive, others, alas! in ruins—which remind us of the great architects of the 12th and following centuries

Those who travel through England visiting its ancient Cathedral towns find in each that the absorbing feature of interest is its Cathedral and other historic buildings and institutions. They form the centre and pride of each town or city fortunate enough to possess them. They are a magnet which attracts visitors from all parts. Without them many of such towns would now be but little importance outside their own purely local interests, and would have little to recommend them. So it is with Christchurch. Set in the estuary of the Rivers Avon and Stour. It has natural beauties which are by no means to be despised. Its crowning feature however, is its Church replete with associations of the past—from the time of its foundation—through the troubling times of the 16th century, when it escaped the fate of most monastic institutions and so down to the present day.

To preserve the surroundings and amenities of such a building is surely an object which should commend itself to all lovers of beauty, and first of all to those who have the advantage of living in its immediate neighbourhood. We, therefore, commend this appeal to our readers as worthy of generous support, for we would not have it said in the future that we so little valued this great national possession that we stood by and stretched forth no helping hand towards the preservation of its amenities.

CHURCH HATCH.

WILL COUNCIL BORROW BALANCE OR DROP THE SCHEME?

C.T. MARCH 16, 1929

An important statement regarding Church Hatch was made at the annual parochial meeting in connection with Christchurch Priory, which was held at the Church Hall on Tuesday evening, the Vicar (Rev. Canon W. H. Gay, R.D.) presiding.

The annual report of the Church Council, presented by Mr. Alan Druitt (the hon. secretary) outlined the history of the negotiations to acquire Church Hatch for the Priory Church, stating that the ownership of this property changed hands in September and in consequence of a report that the new owner intended to develop the two acres for building purposes a special meeting of the Church Council was held on September 18, when a committee was appointed with power to add to its numbers—either from within the Church Council or from without—with full power to make an appeal for public subscriptions with the view to the preservation of the present surroundings and amenities and to secure “the vesting of the property in perpetuity in some body or corporation of persons and upon such trusts to its user as will for ever remove any danger of its development for building purposes.” The committee were authorised to “take all other steps and proceedings which may be necessary in the matter.”

The matter came before the Church Council again on February 1, and with the sanction of the Council the committee renewed its efforts to raise the necessary funds by public subscription. The appeal was re-issued, a public meeting was held in Bournemouth, and every endeavour had been and was still being

made to realise the object of the Council. The committee had also obtained from the owners a modification of their terms, reducing the price from £5,500 to £5,032. Towards this sum the committee had received donations and promises amounting to £2,400.

Continuing, the report stated: "One of the terms of the owners is that the Council must decide not later than March 25 whether they will enter into a contract to purchase. The Council is therefore faced with the alternatives:

"1. That failing the raising of the sum required by subscription, some other means such as borrowing at interest any deficit, must be adopted.

"2. To abandon the proposal as being impossible of achievement.

"Which of these alternatives the Council will adopt remains to be ascertained, in the light of the sum raised, at the first meeting of the new Council.

"In making their endeavours for the preservation of the surroundings and amenities the Council believes that it has behind it the support and approval not only of the societies those special interest it is to safeguard the beauty spots of the country, but also of all people who, being anxious for the preservation of such surroundings, desire to see no change in the features of the Church Hatch property—whether by conversion into shops or by the erection of buildings or otherwise.

Mr. H.T.H. Cook said the annual account showed that over £2,000 had been spent on repairs to the Priory Church in the past year, and that £618 had been contributed towards this expenditure from the Visitors Box Fund. The receipts from the Visitors Box Fund amounted to £1,400 or more a year, made up of moneys contributed by strangers who inspect the church. It was of first importance to visitors and the national point of view that Church Hatch should be preserved, and he could not see why the Council could not satisfy themselves with £1,000 out of this fund for repairs and devote any balance to the Church Hatch account. He threw that out as a suggestion.

The Vicar: You quite forget that we cannot alienate that money. If there is anything over from repairs it must be devoted to the spiritual needs of the parish.

Mr. Cook: I should have thought that the acquisition of Church Hatch would be for the spiritual needs.

The Vicar: I don't think that the Courts would allow that to be spiritual.

Continuing, the Vicar said he was afraid that the meeting at Bournemouth, from which they hoped so much, proved a failure.

Mr J.W. Tucker proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Alan Druitt for all the time and trouble he had taken regarding the Church Hatch negotiations and appeal, remarking that nobody realised the enormous amount of work and time that he had devoted to the effort.

The Vicar, in seconding, endorsed this, remarking that Mr. Alan Druitt had done everything that was possible. He announced that the committee were going to have another interview with Messrs. Lambert Bros., the owners, and the Council would be advised as to the result. The work performed by Mr. Alan Druitt had been prodigious.

The vote having been carried, Mr. Alan Druitt, in acknowledging, said there had been "a labour of love" to him. Any proposal which would in any way spoil or damage the surroundings and amenities of the Church was a matter which affected all of us, and we should all do our best to protect them. "If it is the result of our labours—as I hope it will—that the property will be preserved in its present state I should be amply repaid for any small trouble I may have taken," he concluded amid applause.